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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN ABEYANCE IN NON-DEMOCRACIES: THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN FRANCO'S SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

Social movements experience periods of intense activity and periods of abeyance, when collective action is very weak because of an inhospitable political climate. Non-democracies are extreme cases of hostile political environments for social movements. Drawing on a case study of the women's movement in Franco's Spain (mid-1930s - 1975) based on an analysis of published documents and seventeen interviews, this article argues that some non-democracies force social movements that existed prior to dictatorships into a period of abeyance and shape collective organizing in terms of location, goals and repertoire of activities. Some social movements under prolonged non-democratic rule manage to link and transmit the aims, repertoire of activities and collective identity of pre-dictatorship activists to those of post-dictatorship activists. This occurs mainly through cultural activities.

Key words: social movements; women's movements; abeyance; non-democracies; Spain; Franco

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INTRODUCTION

In many Western countries, the first and second waves of the women's movement were separated by a period of abeyance (Taylor, 1989). Although the chronology of this abeyance

phase varied from country to country, the inter-war period and the decades after World War II are usually considered the abeyance stage, when feminist activism was considerably weak because of non-conducive political environments. The mobilization of women activists helped bridge the first and second wave of the women's movement, enabling continuity of some networks, goals and tactics, and transmission of collective identity across decades. On the other hand, also in the last century, in some Western and developing countries, polities experienced periods of non-democratic rule. For social movements, non-democracies constitute hostile political environments *par excellence*.(1) How (or whether or when) do women's movements under long-lasting authoritarian political regimes manage to link and transmit the aims, repertoires of tactics and collective identities of pre-dictatorship activists to those of post-dictatorship activists? The concept of abeyance was developed in reference to social movements in democratic settings. Is this concept also useful for analyzing social movement continuity in non-democratic settings?

These main questions are answered in this article with the case study of Franco's Spain. From the mid-1930s to 1975, Spain was governed by a right-wing authoritarian regime headed by General Francisco Franco which severely curtailed women's rights and status. During this abeyance phase, the nature of the political regime shaped women's organizing in at least three regards. First, the overwhelming majority of women's organizations active in previous years disappeared because the regime intensively repressed most types of collective action. Women activists frequently pursued their demands individually instead of collectively and/or within groups created during the abeyance period. Alternatively, activists also attempted to bring about social change by mobilizing within groups of civil society permitted or tolerated by the regime, such as auxiliary organizations of the Catholic Church or housewives' associations. Second, while some activists engaged in complicated interchanges

with political authorities to bring about legal reforms, others directly mobilized underground in favor of regime change. Finally, activists resorted to unobtrusive activities to achieve their goals. Activists frequently engaged in cultural activities such as writing. Through these and other activities, women activists under Franco helped link the pre- and post-Franco waves of the women's movement.

In this article, I proceed in five steps. First, I review the literature on social movements in abeyance and scholarship on social movements in non-democracies. Second, I present the empirical case and specify the sources used in this research. Third, I succinctly describe the first wave of the Spanish women's movement. Fourth, I analyze women's organizing in Franco's Spain. Fifth, I assess the consequences of women's organizing in Franco's time on the second wave of the Spanish women's movement, which became active starting mainly in the 1970s. This article does not describe the evolution of the Spanish women's movement between the mid-1930s and 1975 in and of itself, but rather focuses only on the features of the movement in terms of political regime/movement interactions and waves of mobilization.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN ABEYANCE AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN NON-DEMOCRACIES

The concept of abeyance was first used by sociologist Taylor (1989) to name the period between 1920 and the mid-1960s in the United States, which divided the first and second waves of women's collective activism. The first wave of the American women's movement developed from the abolitionist mobilization of the 1830s, reached a peak of mass mobilization between 1900 and 1920, and deflated after the suffrage victory in 1920. The second wave of the American women's movement originated in the mid-1960s and reached a

peak of mass mobilization in the 1970s (Taylor, 1989, p. 762). In Taylor's words (1989), "[t]he term 'abeyance' depicts a holding process by which movements sustain themselves in nonreceptive political environments and provide continuity from one stage of mobilization to another" (p. 761). In the United States, women's collective efforts that existed between 1920 and the mid-1960s provided the second wave of feminist activism with three elements: activist networks, goals and tactical choices, and a collective identity (Taylor, 1989, pp. 770-772).

Although scholarship on movements in abeyance usually affirms that political opportunities shape the course of social movements in abeyance periods (Bagguley, 2002, p. 172; Staggenborg, 1996, p. 143; Taylor, 1989, p.761), surprisingly, this literature is silent on political regimes. Perhaps this is due to the fact that most of the empirical cases studied in articles and books on abeyance were or are democratic polities (however imperfect some of these democracies were or are). But non-democratic regimes abound outside the contemporary post-industrial world and have constituted an important proportion of regimes worldwide in most of the last two centuries.

In non-democracies, "societies lack a mechanism for regular, legitimate transfers of power sanctioned by those subject to the state" (Osa and Corduneanu-Huci, 2003, p. 610). Basic civil and political rights are not guaranteed, and the mass media are controlled by the state. Political mobilization is confined to structures sponsored by the regime, such as a single party. The manifestation of dissent is intrinsic to democracy, but in non-democracies power holders usually interpret dissent as an attack against the regime and repress it. Thus, social movement activity is a very high cost/high risk activity (Osa and Corduneanu-Huci, 2003, pp. 606, 610-611; Osa and Schock, 2007, pp. 124, 127).

Studies on social movements in dictatorships are less numerous than in democracies

(Almeida, 2003, pp. 345-346; Hipsher, 1998, p. 149). Generally speaking and with exceptions, scholarship on social movements in non-democracies is state-oriented and/or policy oriented. Authors often study collective efforts to transform the political regime and/or oppose policies elaborated by political authorities. Numerous analyses on collective activism in repressive settings focus on specific moments: transitions to democracy and to a lesser extent, periods of liberalization of authoritarian political regimes (Almeida, 2003, p. 346; Castells, 1983, pp. 215-288; Osa and Corduneanu-Huci, 2003, p. 606). In particular, the contribution of social movements to the democratization of polities is a topic of major interest in this literature (Hipsher, 1998, pp. 151-152). Although social movement activism is a highly dangerous activity, protests at times take place, and scholars have often directed their attention to the study of protest events such as strikes, demonstrations, riots, sit-ins or armed attacks (Almeida, 2003; Fishman, 1990; Maravall, 1978; Osa and Corduneanu-Huci, 2003).

What does scholarship on social movements in non-democratic regimes say about the main concern of abeyance studies, that is, the continuity of movements between waves of mobilization? Very little, because this is not a central topic of the literature on collective action in repressive settings. Let us remember that the focus of most analyses on movements in non-democracies is on transitions, democratization, policies, and protest events. In some cases, dictatorships destroy the organizational infrastructure of social movements active in the past but some cultures of resistance remain alive and become the bases for later mobilization. Hipsher's work documents that through the shantytown dwellers' movement in Chile, the urban poor mobilized around housing, basic services and economic issues from the 1950s onwards. After 1973 Pinochet's coup, the shantytown movement was deactivated and re-emerged mainly in the 1980s (still under Pinochet's rule) (Hipsher, 1998, pp. 156-157). However, Hipsher does not specify the mechanisms which enabled movement revival after

demobilization. Still other studies present social movements as if these appeared *ex novo* during the liberalizing phase of non-democratic regimes or in the last years of authoritarian rule. Such is the case of Castells' study on the social movement around urban issues which developed mainly (but not exclusively) in working-class neighborhoods in Spanish cities in the 1970s (Castells, 1983, 215-288). All in all, research on social movements in authoritarian settings provides non-satisfactory accounts on whether (and when, and how) social activism is maintained under non-democratic rule.

A combination of the insights of the literatures on social movements in abeyance and collective action in non-democracies may contribute to correct the biases and/or fill in the gaps of both literatures. Attention to non-democratic regimes may help rectify the democracy-inclination of scholarship on movements in abeyance. The study of continuity of social movements under authoritarian rule may help weaken the transition-bias of studies on non-democracies by analyzing periods when the political regime is not being transformed. In addition, the analysis of continuity of social activism in autocracies may mitigate the state- and policy-inclination of scholarship of social movements in authoritarian regimes by studying what happens not only in the political arena but also in society. To develop such a combination of findings from both literatures, let me present them in some detail related to the thesis that in democracies and non-democracies, the political opportunity structure influences social movements in terms of (i) location, (ii) goals, and (iii) repertoire of activities.

(i) Regarding the location of collective action, the abeyance literature on democracies makes explicit claims. Taylor (1989) focuses her research on the formal women's organizations that survived between the first and second waves of the women's movement in the United States, and studied one of them in depth: the National Woman's Party. Similarly,

in his analysis of the women's movement in Britain in the 1990s and the early years of the twenty-first century, Bagguley (2002) affirms that "rather than new social movement organizations emerging, abeyance is characterized by the decline and merger of pre-existing social movement organizations" (p. 174). Taylor and Bagguley argue that inhospitable political climates make it arduous for social movements to attract new recruits. Subsequently, a considerable proportion of activists during abeyance times are long-time members of the movement who have also been active in the previous stage of mobilization. Conversely, Staggenborg (1996) states that "different types of abeyance structures operate in different local environments and political contexts" (p. 156). Staggenborg shows that in the 1980s and 1990s in a place characterized by high turnover of local population such as Bloomington, Indiana, the women's movement continued to exist in the absence of stable surviving movement organizations. The majority of activists during the abeyance times were not long-time members from the previous phase of mobilization.

Findings of studies on non-democracies lead me to suggest, in line with Staggenborg's argument, that in non-democratic regimes, it is probable that the central location of activism are not the surviving groups run by a core of long-term committed members from former decades. In some dictatorships, few (if any) of the social movement organizations (SMOs) from the previous period endure during the abeyance years because of strong state repression. Committed members from the previous stage of the mobilization may be killed, in prison, in exile or living underground (Maravall, 1978, p. 22; Schneider, 1992, p. 268). Subsequently, most activists during the abeyance phase may be new to the movement. Social movement activity may be carried out by new groups created in the abeyance period. These new groups may not be SMOs but rather informal circles or networks, because dictatorships severely curtail the right to association (Maravall, 1978, pp. 65, 165-166; Osa and Corduneanu-Huci,

2003, pp. 613-618; Osa and Schock, 2007, p.138). Otherwise, former and/or new activists may attempt to reach their goals by mobilizing within the few organizations permitted by the non-democratic regime, such as churches or cultural associations (Schneider, 1992, p. 260).

(ii) As for the goals of social movements, scholarship on democracies proposes that the adverse political environment that characterizes an abeyance period also affects the selection of goals by social movements. According to Taylor (1989, pp.766-767), "purposive commitment" is a feature of movements in abeyance. In the United States, in the abeyance period between 1920 and the mid-1960s, the National Woman's Party focused on a single goal: an equal rights amendment. Given the small number of National Women's Party activists during abeyance years, its leaders rejected other versions of a feminist program and deliberately invested the energies of members in the single issue of a constitutional amendment.

In contrast, the literature on social movements in repressive settings seems to indicate that it is unlikely that in dictatorships, movements focus on a single goal. Political regime change is the goal of many movements (and not exclusively of democratization movements), because most activities of movements are severely constrained by the lack of the most basic rights (Castells, 1983, p. 222). Social movements may also pursue the goal of policy reform in order to erode the most arbitrary, repressive or discriminatory measures enacted by policy makers. In both cases, the non-democratic nature of the political regime influences social movements making them prone to fight for various political goals. Additionally, social movements may try to achieve other goals, such as the improvement of women's status, the economic betterment of the working-class or the amelioration of living conditions in disadvantaged neighborhoods (Castells, 1983; Hipsher, 1998, p. 149; Maravall, 1978).

(iii) With respect to the repertoire of activities, the literature on democracies states

that in abeyance periods, social movements often engage in activities that are less confrontational and obtrusive than the activities undertaken during insurgent phases (Bagguley, 2002, pp. 173-174; Taylor, 1989, p. 771). This scholarship also notes that movements have a tendency to focus on cultural activities at times of abeyance (Staggenborg and Taylor, 2005). Crucial to the original conception of abeyance, and how it has been used in subsequent decades, is the implication that there will be the transmission of knowledge providing continuity between waves of movement activism (Taylor, 1989; Staggenborg, 1996).

Findings of the literature on social movements in autocracies lead me to argue that in non-democratic regimes in abeyance years, SMOs and activists are especially prone to engage in unobtrusive activities, and particularly in cultural ones. In the face of state repression, social movement activists are likely to put a lot of effort into activities that can be pursued by individuals alone and partially out of the public arena because collective protest in public spaces is usually banned and many activists are not collectively organized. Examples of this type of activity are intellectual enterprises such as conducting research on history and sociology. Similarly, activists may engage in cultural activities because some of these may not be prohibited by dictatorships, unlike political activities (Maravall, 1978, pp. 9, 100-104). Through cultural activities, committed militants may transmit knowledge between phases of mobilization.(2)

EMPIRICAL CASE AND SOURCES

In this article, I analyze social movements in abeyance under non-democratic rule with the empirical case of the women's movement in Franco's Spain. I use the definition of "women's movements" coined by Ferree and Mueller (2004): "all organizing of women explicitly as

women to make any sort of social change." Women's organizing as women is usually termed "feminist" when it makes "efforts to challenge and change gender relations that subordinate women to men" (p. 577). However, women's mobilization as women may try to tackle other social relations.

After a military coup against the democratic Second Republic (1931-1936), a three-year bloody civil war (1936-1939) took place. It ended with the victory of Franco's supporters. A right-wing authoritarian regime governed the country until 1975. Unquestionably, in Franco's Spain, the political climate was extremely unfavorable to social movements. Freedom of expression and association was banned and a severe censorship was imposed on mass media. The only political organizations permitted were the single party *Falange* and its auxiliary organizations, such as the Feminine Section of the *Falange*, which managed most women's issues in Franco's Spain. Former members and leaders of left-wing and Republican organizations were ferociously repressed (Linz, 1970).

In Franco's Spain, the political environment was also very hostile to the women's movement. Gender equality policies elaborated during the Second Republic (see below) were dismantled by Francoist policy makers. Furthermore, Franco's dictatorship intensively pursued women's subordination. Civil law considered married women as minors. Motherhood was defined as women's main obligation toward the state and society. The role of mothering was perceived as incompatible with other activities, such as waged work. The state took measures to prevent women's labor outside the home. An example of this was the requirement that a married woman obtain her husband's permission before signing a labor contract and engaging in trade (Ruiz, 2007).

The Catholic Church played a paramount role in society and politics. Spain was a nearly homogeneous Catholic country after the expulsion of Jews in 1492 and of Muslims in

1609. The Catholic Church significantly contributed to the anti-feminist imprint of Francoist policies for women by endlessly predicating women's subordination to men, women's confinement to home and family, and the restriction of women's sexuality to reproduction within marriage. In the area of reproductive rights and sexuality, public policies conformed to the restrictive Catholic doctrine, for example, by criminalizing abortion in all circumstances and prohibiting the selling and advertising of contraceptives (Morcillo, 2010).

Franco's Spain is an empirical case particularly useful to study women's organizing during an abeyance phase in an authoritarian setting because Franco's regime lasted four decades. Such a lengthy period meant that there was no other scenario but a dictatorship for social movement activists.(3) Moreover, the international arena was to some extent favorable to gender equality claims only at the very end of the dictatorship, with the United Nations declaration of 1975 as International Women's Year and the preparation of the First World Conference on Women to be held in Mexico in 1975. In contrast to Franco's Spain, other dictatorships such as those of some Latin American countries lasted a shorter period, and in the 1970s and 1980s existed in an international context more conducive to gender equality.

Academic works are a main source of this article, which could not have been written in the absence of an existing (and vast) scholarship on the Franco's regime and a (not so vast) bibliography on some parts of the women's movement under the dictatorship. In Franco's Spain, some members and leaders of women's organizing were prolific authors, and subsequently scholars can study their activism partly through their publications. As shown below, part of women's organizing took place in women's auxiliary organizations of the Catholic Church, such as Women's Catholic Action. It is a strand of the women's movement less studied than other strands such as women's organizing in the underground opposition to the dictatorship. Thus, I chose to analyze published primary sources by Women's Catholic

Action. It published a monthly periodical for its leaders: *Bulletin for Leaders* (*Circular para Dirigentes*). I have consulted all issues of *Bulletin for Leaders* between 1955 and 1966. Women's Catholic Action also published a magazine for a wider female readership: *Path* (*Senda*). I have consulted all issues of *Path* between 1952 and 1966. In addition, in 2009 in Madrid, I conducted eleven face-to-face semi-structured interviews with leaders of the women's movement active during the dictatorship. Interviews lasted between 35 minutes and two hours. The ages of the youngest and eldest interviewees were 70 and 94 years respectively. Eight interviewees were in their eighties. In 2010 in Madrid, I also conducted six face-to-face semi-structured interviews with close relatives of activists who were dead or seriously ill and subsequently could not be interviewed. These interviews with relatives lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. All interviews were conducted in Spanish, which is my native language. I tape-recorded and transcribed all interviews in full. Due to space constraints, direct quotes are included in this article only from interviews with activists.

In the three types of sources of data (bibliography, published primary sources and interviews), I looked for information on women's organizing in Franco's Spain regarding location, goals and repertoires of activities. I also searched for data on the existence (or absence) of links in women's activism before, during and after the dictatorship. The pursuit for evidence in the sources was deduced from the literatures on movements in abeyance and movements in non-democracies, and did not require coding or the use of a qualitative research software program. I made every attempt to use information that comes from two or more unrelated sources.

In spite of the frailties of memory, interviews were particularly helpful and unique sources because these reveal what could not be made public in the dictatorship under mass media censorship. As of this writing some of the interviewees are already dead or no longer

available for interviews because of health reasons. I could ask my interviewees questions that were not satisfactorily answered by studying the bibliography (and published primary sources). For instance, bibliography very often (but not always) analyzes women's activism in a specific period of the political history of the country (be it the Second Republic, the dictatorship or the transition to democracy) while I attempt to unravel continuities across political periods.

THE FIRST WAVE OF THE SPANISH WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

In the nineteenth century, individual activists such as social reformer Concepción Arenal and writer Emilia Pardo Bazán claimed that the position of Spanish women as a group was subordinate and unfair, stated that women's destiny should not be confined to marriage and maternity, and demanded among other things women's access to education, paid employment, and public arenas such as social action and cultural production (Nash, 1994, p. 163). The first wave of the Spanish women's movement was composed principally (but not exclusively) of three types of SMOs: women's rights groups; left-wing associations; and female Catholic organizations. Women's rights groups were formed in the main cities of the country, and comprised upper and upper-middle class women, whose educational attainment was considerably higher than that of the average Spanish woman (in 1900, 71 percent of Spanish women were illiterate) (Nash, 1994, pp. 164-165). Most of these groups were set up in the first decades of the twentieth century, that is, later than in other Western countries. The most important women's rights group was the National Association of Spanish Women (*Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Españolas*, ANME). It demanded among other things women's access to education, equality of women and men before the law, the vote and the prohibition of prostitution. The ANME manifesto did not include any demand that was

openly anti-Catholic, such as divorce, contraception or abortion (Nash, 1994, p. 170; Scanlon, 1976, pp. 203-209).

Since the last decades of the nineteenth century, working-class women were organized as women within left-wing political organizations, such as the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party, anarchist organizations, and later the Spanish Communist Party. These left-wing women's associations were principally interested in the improvement of working-class women's lot, and linked this goal to class struggle and the erosion or disappearance of class inequality. These left-wing women's associations also demanded among other things women's access to paid employment and education, the end of sex discrimination in the labor market, the recognition of women's reproductive rights, and sexual liberation (Scanlon, 1976, pp. 102-103, 241-245).

Female Catholic organizations were formed in the first decades of the twentieth century. For example, female Catholic unions were founded between 1909 and 1920 principally in some of the main cities. These organizations provided various types of assistance to their members, including mutual aid, religious and professional training, and recreational opportunities. Female Catholic unions argued that the improvement of working-class women's situation would not be achieved by class struggle but through conciliation of workers' and employers' interests under the influence of Catholic social doctrine (Nash, 1994, p. 169).

An upsurge of women's organizations (of all sorts) took place during the first Spanish experiment with full democracy in the twentieth century: the Second Republic (1931-1936). In 1931, three women were elected to the Constitutional Assembly: Clara Campoamor, Victoria Kent, and Margarita Nelken. These three had formerly defended feminist causes. On December 9, 1931, the Constitutional Assembly approved a Constitution. It declared women

and men equal before the law, instituted divorce for civil marriages, established that civil law would regulate the search to establish paternity, and instituted female suffrage (Scanlon, 1976, pp. 261-290).

WOMEN'S ORGANIZING IN FRANCO'S SPAIN

In general, standard accounts on the women's movement (as a whole) in Franco's Spain are written mainly from a historical perspective and are not ingrained in sociological theory on activism. These scholarly works state that strictly speaking, at least during the first three decades of the dictatorship, women's organizing did not happen. This literature dates the advent of the women's movement at different points in time between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s. At that time, women's groups advancing gender-equality claims appeared in the opposition to the authoritarian regime, where they encountered illegal left-wing political parties and unions. After 1975, women's groups mushroomed in Spain. The second wave of the Spanish women's movement reached a peak of mobilization during the transition to democracy and the early 1980s, when it continued to exist in a consolidated but less public and visible way (di Febo, 1979; Martínez, Gutiérrez & González, 2009; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999; Scanlon, 1976, pp. 320-356).

The analytical insights of the abeyance literature and scholarship on social movements in non-democracies enable me to elaborate a different account of women's organizing in Franco's Spain. Rather than exterminating the women's movement that existed prior to the dictatorship, the non-democratic political regime forced the women's movement into a period of abeyance and deeply influenced women's organizing regarding location, goals, and repertoire of activities.

Location

In Franco's Spain, because of state repression, hardly any important women's associations from the Second Republic remained in place. In the near absence of women's SMOs from the previous wave of mobilization, women's activism shifted to two main arenas: organizations permitted by the regime (women's groups within the Catholic Church, and housewives' associations); and new women's SMOs. Women activists tended to lack experience in the previous phase of women's collective action.

For the first wave of the Spanish women's movement, the Franco's dictatorship meant an almost fatal blow. In Francoist policymakers' view, Spanish feminism was historically associated with the left, liberalism and lay or anti-clerical politics; these three political options were targets to be eliminated by the dictatorship. Especially in the civil war and the post war years, when state repression was particularly ferocious, some feminists went into exile, including the first three female parliamentarians of the Second Republic. Others were dead. Some of those who remained in the country were in prison, while those outside the prison walls ended their political activities and kept silent in order to survive (di Febo, 1979).

Scholarship sporadically mentions the establishment of Spanish left-wing women's groups and networks in exile. In the 1940s in Mexico and France, some women who had been active in the Anti-fascist Women's Group (*Agrupación de Mujeres Antifascistas*, AMA) of the Second Republic were among the founders of the Spanish Women's Union (*Unión de Mujeres Españolas*, UME), and the Union of Spanish Anti-fascist women (*Unión de Mujeres Antifascistas Españolas*, UMAE) respectively. But these and other women's initiatives in exile did not result in the reconstruction in exile of the women's movement from the Second Republic. The main goals of UME and UMAE were not demands around women's issues but the fight against the dictatorship, and the support to prisoners and underground political

dissidents in Franco's Spain (Domínguez, 2009, pp. 77-80). In addition, the women's (and men's) exile was geographically dispersed. For example, the three first women parliamentarians of the Second Republic, Clara Campoamor, Victoria Kent and Margarita Nelken, lived in Switzerland, the United States and Mexico respectively.

Secondary sources do not refer to any feminist organization from the Second Republic which continued its activities in the first years of Franco's Spain, with one partial (but important) exception: The Spanish Association of University Women (*Asociación Española de Mujeres Universitarias*, AEMU). The AEMU was legally established in 1953 and became a member of the International Federation of University Women in 1955. According to the 1953 AEMU's statutes, the purpose of the AEMU was to support female university students and women with university degrees in their professional careers. The AEMU was set up by some women linked to a women's SMO active between 1920 and 1937: the Female University Youth (*Juventud Universitaria Femenina*, JUF). Some of the leaders of the first wave of the Spanish feminist movement had belonged to the JUF, including Clara Campoamor, who was a member of Parliament between 1931 and 1933 and also JUF president until 1933. The association created in 1953 had a different name from its predecessor (AEMU instead of JUF), and the members of the first AEMU directive teams were carefully chosen among women who were not particularly known for their connection to the JUF (Maillard, 1990).

In Franco's Spain, some of the women's efforts against the antifeminist ideals promoted by political authorities (and the hierarchy of the Catholic Church) were advanced by female leaders and activists within auxiliary organizations of the Catholic Church mainly from the 1950s onwards. The Catholic Church also partly supported or inspired other social movements such as the labor movement (Fishman, 1990; Linz, 1970, p. 259).

Let me use the case of Women's Catholic Action established in Spain in 1919 to illustrate this surge of women's organizing. Most leaders and activists of this women's lay organization were from the upper- and upper-middle classes. The primary activities of Women's Catholic Action were religious and charitable. Some leaders of Women's Catholic Action had actively promoted the establishment of female Catholic unions (Nash, 1994, p. 169). During the Second Republic, Women's Catholic Action also engaged in political activities such as attempts to obtain women's votes for conservative political parties. During the civil war, leaders and members of Women's Catholic Action continued to combine strictly religious initiatives with other activities supporting Franco's side in the rearguard.

After the civil war, Women's Catholic Action worked intensively on the reconstruction and expansion of the organization. Whereas in 1941, the Women's Catholic Action had 35,000 members, in 1953, it had almost five times more: 172,056 (Blasco, 1999, p. 160). However, its activists did not reconstruct female Catholic unions, because the Francoist regime banned any type of workers' unions (including Catholic unions) and only permitted the existence of the so-called "vertical unions", which were state-led organizations comprising employers and workers. Women's Catholic Action enthusiastically embraced the battle of the rechristianization of Spanish society after the (presumed) previous de-christianization, with initiatives such as preaching in various locations including women's prisons, charitable work, frequent religious ceremonies including masses, the rosary and pilgrimages to sanctuaries, the incessant fight against immodesty in women's clothing, and the endless prudish battle for morality in public places such as movie theaters, dance halls, and beaches.

Given the pious and politically conservative trajectory of Women's Catholic Action up to the 1950s, it was unexpected that such an organization could be the home of women's

activism to improve women's status. But the Catholic Church played a constraining or facilitating role regarding women's organizing in non-democratic regimes in different cases. In Spain in the 1950s, leaders of Women's Catholic Action shifted the perspective that guided the training to their female leaders and members of the organization. Training programs with an active pedagogy were routinely offered to (and imposed on) cadres and the rank-and-file. In these courses, women were taught to observe reality, think critically about this reality (from a Catholic point of view) and act to improve this reality. Time and again, women were urged to be active Catholics instead of passive and submissive pious souls.

Pilar Bellosillo was the President of Women's Catholic Action between 1952 and 1963, and in part obtained the inspiration to change the Spanish Women's Catholic Action from abroad. As in other authoritarian regimes, the fact that the elite had contact with other countries and traveled abroad to some extent limited the efforts that political elites made to control society (Linz, 1970, p. 266). Already in 1952, Pilar Bellosillo became a member of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations (WUCWO) Executive committee. She was WUCWO President between 1961 and 1974. The WUCWO enthusiastically supported an active role of lay women in public arenas. With other Catholic leaders, in national and international fora, Pilar Bellosillo continuously demanded that women (and lay people in general) play a more influential and autonomous role from the hierarchy within the Church, and that women's status in society improve (Moreno, 2005, pp. 113, 125-128). As a member of the National Council of Women's Catholic Action María Quereizaeta explained in the interview:

> Pilar Bellosillo realized ... that within the Catholic Church women were discriminated against ... At the WUCWO, an international organization, she was demanding that

> women's status improved. And she wanted to bring that battle to Spain. She wanted women's conditions in Spain to change for the better and that even within marriage, women would be respected and no longer subjected to their husband's will (Quereizaeta, 2009).

The insistence of leaders of Women's Catholic Action on women's autonomy within the Church and women's critical thinking represented a clear break with the past and encountered strong resistance within part of the Church hierarchy. In the interview, President of Women's Catholic Action between 1962 and 1968 Carmen Victory recalled the Conference of Metropolitans (the predecessor of the episcopal conference):

> That [the Conference of Metropolitans] was my battle. I visited all the bishops, one by one. And they said to me "Do not get women out of their homes!" ... And I replied "But I get women out of their homes to do good!" The [bishops] wanted women in their homes ... or in the parish, praying in the pews or performing the most humble services. It was impossible to change bishops' minds. They died with that [traditional] mentality (Victory, 2009).

Member of the National Council of Women's Catholic Action María Quereizaeta explained in the interview that disagreement between leaders of Women's Catholic Action and the Church hierarchy was profound:

> In general, we did not agree with what bishops published. Some bishops supported us but these were clearly a minority ... Some bishops did not like that we delivered

> training courses in their dioceses ... At times, the bishops did not attend the closing ceremony, although we always invited them (Quereizaeta, 2009).

However, the type of women's emancipation predicated by Women's Catholic Action was not without limits. Issues of sexuality and reproduction were not priorities of the organization. It also set lines that women's autonomy and critical thinking should not cross: marriage, which Catholic doctrine defines as an indissoluble sacrament, and fertility control, which was (and still is) severely restricted by Catholic doctrine. In the interview with Vice-President of Women's Catholic Action Ángela de Silva, head of the training schemes that the organization delivered to rural women, she remembered that:

> Rural women worked in the fields all day. They were their husbands' slaves ... Husbands treated their wives like servants ... In those days, these women [in unhappy marriages] did not separate from their husbands at all. We [training instructors] told thousands of them that they had to put up with it. It is tremendous, but in those years it was like that! (de Silva, 2009).

In the interview, Vice-President of Women's Catholic Action Ángela de Silva also recalled about fertility control:

> At that time, women's status was awful. We, women, had to reproduce like female rabbits! ... I firmly believe that the Catholic Church has to be more open-minded. It is impossible to have as many children as they come. But we [training instructors] could not [speak about] condoms; we avoided the issue. We told rural women not to have

sex (de Silva, 2009).

Especially during the last two decades of the Francoist dictatorship, activists of different social movements such as the labor movement decided to join the organizations established or permitted by the regime in order to advance claims from these legal spaces (Maravall, 1978, pp. 74-75). This was also the case of the women's movement. In the mid-1960s, housewives associations were formed. These housewives' organizations under the auspices of the regime mobilized around consumer issues and promoted the status of housewives (Radcliff, 2011). Feminist activists from a new (clandestine) communist-influenced organization created in 1965, the Democratic Women's Movement (*Movimiento Democrático de Mujeres*, MDM) (see below), decided to join these pro-Franco housewives' associations in order to benefit from their legal status and reach a large number of women. As MDM leader Mercedes Comabella explained in the interview:

> It was tremendously difficult to have access to women if our organization was underground and illegal. In other words, bear in mind that for years we knocked door by door saying: "We are a women's group concerned about the woman's question, and would like to speak to you, and this, and that." Clearly, this was very, very difficult. First of all, because the majority of times, women slammed the door in our face ... I was a convinced defender of infiltration [into housewives' associations] ... After knocking doors ... we barely reached 10 women when we had to reach 10,000 (Comabella, 2009).

MDM activists were discovered by leaders of pro-Franco housewives' associations

and were expelled from them. In 1969-1970, these MDM activists pretended to found new pro-Franco housewives' associations and managed to establish five associations in Madrid neighborhoods or villages surrounding Madrid. In reality, MDM members founded housewives' associations with a progressive, feminist and anti-Franco orientation. These anti-Franco associations attempted to open routes for women to abandon their status of housewives and participate in the labor market, demanded collective infrastructures such as child care centers, and supported a broader feminist agenda including equality of men and women before the law and access to contraception (Comabella, 2009; Radcliff 2011; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 40-45).

Goals

Franco's regime influenced the goals of women's organizing in at least two regards. Some individuals and SMOs, especially in the last half of the authoritarian regime, mobilized around the goal of persuading political elites to temper some anti-feminist policies. Alternatively, also during the last two decades of Franco's rule, clandestine women's groups were formed in the illegal opposition to the authoritarian regime, where they met underground left-wing political parties and trade unions. Regime change was one of the goals of these women's groups.

Persuading political elites to lessen the discriminatory treatment to women by civil law was one of the main goals of women's efforts made individually and collectively. In 1953, female lawyer Mercedes Formica published an article in the newspaper *ABC* titled "The conjugal home" (*El domicilio conyugal*), where she criticized that in cases of legal separation of couples, legislation stated that the family home was the husband's home. For women, a marital separation usually meant the loss of everything: home, children and assets.

Denouncing a case of domestic violence, Mercedes Formica argued that Spanish legislation left women unprotected from abusive husbands, and demanded legal reform. Formica's piece initiated a series of articles in *ABC* discussing the topic. The efforts made by Mercedes Formica and others bore fruit and the Civil Code was slightly reformed in 1958. Thereafter, among other changes, the family home was no longer considered the husband's home. Judges could decide that in cases of marital separation, if the wife was considered the non-guilty partner, she stayed in the family home and kept custody of her children. Interestingly enough, Mercedes Formica belonged to the *Falange* since the 1930s, where she occupied low-level decision making positions. Since the 1930s, she also belonged to the Feminine Section of the *Falange* although by the time of the elaboration of the 1958 reform she had already left the women's branch of the single party (Ruiz, 2007, pp. 49, 57-61, 118-127).

Although the Spanish Association of Women Lawyers (*Asociación Española de Mujeres Juristas*, AEMJ) was legally established in 1971, the gestation of this organization dated back to the late 1950s. Under the leadership of lawyer María Telo, the AEMJ's major goals were the reform of the laws regarding women and families under the principles of equality of women and men, and the professional promotion of female lawyers. María Telo managed to become one of the four female members of the General Commission of Codification. This Commission participated in the preparation of what would become Act 14/1975 of May 2. It reformed civil law in various regards, including the suppression of the requirement that married women obtained their husbands' permission to sign labor contracts and engage in trade (Ruiz, 2007, pp. 195-228; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 50-52; Telo, 2009). In the interview, María Telo claimed for herself the tag "feminist" while speaking retrospectively:

> I think that I was born feminist ... that one was feminist could not be said in Franco's time because that meant the revolution! ... If I could not say so, I did not say so. But I have always, always considered myself feminist (Telo, 2009).

In 1973, the Spanish Association of Legally Separated Women (*Asociación Española de Mujeres Separadas Legalmente*, AEMSL) was founded.(4) However, some of their first members had periodically met in the home of one of them in an informal way in the early 1970s. This women's organization demanded a less discriminatory treatment by law and authorities to women in cases of legal separation, and also provided legal and psychological support to separated women (M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 52-56).

Political regime change was one of the main goals of some of the clandestine women's groups which appeared during the second phase of Franco's regime in the underground opposition to the dictatorship. This was the case of the Democratic Women's Movement (*Movimiento Democrático de Mujeres*, MDM), which was established in 1965. It was linked to the main party in the illegal opposition to the Francoist regime, the Spanish Communist Party, although some MDM members did not belong to any political party. Initially, MDM's main goal was to support political prisoners' wives and female political prisoners, but it linked these goals to a feminist agenda that sought to improve women's lives through mobilization. Moreover, the MDM managed to link working women's concerns, such as housing shortages or lack of basic infrastructure in working class neighborhoods, with broader political issues, including lack of basic rights and liberty or class inequality (M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 29-33).

Repertoire of activities

Franco's regime shaped women's repertoire of activities. Because of the ban of association, activists tried to attain goals by undertaking activities that could be pursued individually. Writing was one of these activities. Cultural activities were of paramount importance for the women's movement, since purely political activities were prohibited or severely restricted. This scenario applied to social movements in general, because the dictatorship tolerated some kinds of ideological debate, especially from the 1960s onwards, while ferociously repressing any manifestation of political dissent or contestation of core structures of the political regime (Maravall, 1978, p. 9). Not surprisingly, women's actions such as signing petitions or demonstrations were very rare (di Febo, 1979, pp. 159-160; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, p. 95).

In the 1940s and 1950s, some of the first public voices against gender inequality were openly raised by women writers. As early as in 1948, María Laffitte, who by marriage had become the Countess of Campo Alange, published a book titled *The secret sex war* (*La secreta guerra de los sexos*) (Campo Alange, [1948] 1950). María Campo Alange, as she was usually known, argued that throughout history, men had dominated women and subsequently humankind had been deprived of the potential contributions that women could have made. She argued that the state of ignorance in which many women lived was not a direct manifestation of women's innate mental inferiority. Rather, women had not been given the opportunity to develop their own capabilities. Since early moments in history, women and men had fought for the right to dominate the cultural sphere.

When in 1960 María Campo Alange attempted to set up a women's group, she asked Lilí Álvarez to join the group and help recruit other members. Lilí Álvarez was the author of books on religion, sports, and women's status. She was better known for her national and international multi-sport achievements most notably reaching the Wimbledon singles' finals

in three consecutive years in the late 1920s. María Campo Alange wanted the other members to have both university training and paid employment. The Seminar for the Sociological Study of Women (*Seminario de Estudios Sociológicos sobre la Mujer*, SESM) was established. SESM members wanted to analyze the position of women in Spanish society and contribute to the dismantling of gender hierarchies (M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 27-29; P. Salas, 2009). The cultural character of the group was emphasized in the interview by SESM member Carmen Pérez-Seoane: “The Seminar was basically a study circle, that is, it was not like an English group which demonstrates in the streets with placards” (Pérez-Seoane, 2009).

SESM members called themselves "feminist", although the word was (and still is) used in a pejorative way in Spain. As SESM member Purificación Salas stressed in the interview:

> In the Seminar, we did not care [that “feminism” was a dirty word]. We wanted to use the word “feminist”, of course. No doubt, the word had negative connotations. But precisely, we wanted it not to have that pejorative nuance (P. Salas, 2009).

Feminist collective organizing was so rare at that time that SESM members highly valued the mere fact of sharing feminist concerns with other women instead of being solitary activists. As SESM member María Jiménez enthusiastically explained in the interview:

> At that time, I was already a feminist. But I had not met many feminists because there were so few! ... [The Seminar] was a wonderful experience ... because I found women with whom to speak about my [feminist] concerns ... Everything was so perfect! (Jiménez, 2009).

After 1960, the SESM published some works collectively. In addition, some SESM members continued to publish alone. The ideas on women's place in society and within the Catholic Church contained in SESM books and articles were without doubt more egalitarian than the gender doctrine proclaimed by the authoritarian regime or the Catholic Church hierarchy and gender norms in society.

The main activities undertaken by some women's groups other than the SESM in Franco's time were also cultural events. This was the case of the Spanish Association of University Women (*Asociación Española de Mujeres Universitarias*, AEMU), which organized public lectures by prominent (and mainly male) intellectuals on arts, humanities and social issues. By an explicit decision of AEMU leaders and members, only a few of these courses and public lectures were dedicated to women's issues. AEMU courses and lectures were attended by women and men, because the AEMU wanted to expand the range of public debate in Franco's Spain for all people (Maillard, 1990, pp. 39, 58-62; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, p. 39).

CONSEQUENCES FOR THE SECOND WAVE OF THE SPANISH WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Taylor (1989, pp. 770-72) proposes that the US women's movement of the abeyance years between 1945 and the mid-1960s had at least three consequences for the next wave of collective activism: (i) activist networks, (ii) an existing repertoire of goals and tactics, and (iii) a collective identity. Similarly, women's organizing in the abeyance times of Franco's Spain left at least three legacies to the second wave of women's mobilization: activist networks, goals and a collective identity. More concretely, in the Spanish case, "activist networks" meant organizational structures for participation and a cadre of leaders who

occupied the first gender equality positions in the new Spanish democracy. In post-authoritarian Spain, "an existing repertoire of goals and tactics" meant mainly heated debates about the goals of the women's movement. After Franco's dictatorship, a "collective identity" was based partly on knowledge of the first wave of women's activism and international feminist literature.

(i) With respect to activist networks, women's organizing in Franco's Spain left organizational structures for participation. Some of the SMOs which existed in Franco's time remained active through the transition to democracy and afterwards. For instance, the SESM continued its activities until the death of its founder María Campo Alange in 1986. In 1973, Pilar de Yzaguirre created an association to improve women's situation through cultural change: the Association for Cultural Promotion and Evolution (*Asociación para la Promoción y Evolución Cultural*, APEC). It existed up to 1982 (de Yzaguirre, 2009; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 45-47). These and other groups formed what can be termed as the liberal or equal rights branch of the second wave of the Spanish women's movement. As liberal branches of women's movements in other Western countries, this Spanish liberal branch identified women's inequality before the law and sexist attitudes among the main causes of women's subordination. The erosion of women's subordination would be achieved through policy reform and cultural change. In contrast with the United States, in post-authoritarian Spain, this liberal branch was clearly a minority branch within the Spanish women's movement, and so was the radical branch. Many Spanish feminist groups subscribed to varieties of Marxist feminism, in part because many feminists were members of or close to left-wing political parties and unions (Martínez et al, 2009). The survival of groups such as the SESM or the APEC was especially important, because these organizations offered women who did not embrace Marxism as main ideology the few sites where they could participate.

The activist networks formed in the abeyance period of Franco's dictatorship left the second wave of the Spanish women's movement a cadre of leaders who occupied the first gender equality positions of the new democracy. Given the long duration of the dictatorship, when Franco died in 1975, leaders of the first wave of women's activism and prominent female politicians from the Second Republic were either deceased or elderly. The first two democratic elections after Franco's death took place in June 1977 and 1979 respectively. In both elections, the majority of the vote was gained by the coalition of center-right and right-parties Union of the Democratic Center (*Unión de Centro Democrático*, UCD). In September 1977, the first gender equality institution of post-Franco Spain was established within the Ministry of Culture, the General Subdirectorate of the Feminine Condition. It was staffed in part with women active in the legal women's groups of the Franco's Spain, including Pilar de Yzaguirre from the Association for Cultural Promotion and Evolution and Mabel Pérez-Serrano from the Spanish Association of Legally Separated Women (M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 104, 120-125). In 1982, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party reached power where it remained up to 1996. Since 1982, Marxist feminists staffed gender equality institutions. But between 1977 and 1982, only liberal feminists wanted (and could fruitfully) do so, because the UCD was ideologically in the center-right or right of the political spectrum.

(ii) As for the goals of the women's movement, women's organizing in Franco's Spain left to the second wave of the women's movement an ongoing discussion about the real objectives of feminist groups and the relationship (if any) between feminist goals and political goals in general. In the 1970s, many Spanish feminists combined membership in a feminist group with another type of organization, such as a left-wing political party or trade union, in order to participate in the democratization of the country and include feminist concerns in mainstream political life. This position was called the double membership position. In

contrast, champions of the single membership position in feminist (and only-female) associations thought that the improvement of women's status could not be pursued in feminist terms within traditional "malestream" organizations such as parties and unions because these contributed to the perpetuation of the unequal relationship between women and men. This type of debate also existed and exists in other Western and developing countries, but in Spain it took a particularly salient, divisive and acrimonious form (Martínez et al, 2009).

(iii) Regarding collective identity, it is "the shared definition of a group that derives from its members common interests and solidarity ... The creation of a shared collective identity requires the group to revise its history and develop symbols to reinforce movement goals and strategies" (Taylor, 1989, p. 771). The transmission of knowledge between the first and second waves of Spanish women's activism was not a straightforward process because the organizations of the first wave did not survive up to the second wave (with one exception) and Francoist mass media censorship imposed severe barriers to the dissemination of information.

Part of the communication of knowledge from the first to the second wave of women's activism occurred through the writings of activists in Franco's Spain. For instance, in 1964, SESM leader María Campo Alange published an impressive study on women's condition in Spain between 1860 and 1960 (Campo Alange, 1964). In this work, Campo Alange highlighted the contribution to Spanish society made by prominent forerunners of the first wave of women's activism such as social reformer Concepción Arenal and writer Emilia Pardo Bazán, first wave women's groups including the National Association of Spanish Women, and even left-wing feminists who were in exile during Franco's dictatorship such as members of the Second Republic Parliament Margarita Nelken and Victoria Kent (Campo Alange, 1964, pp. 101-106, 119-126, 200, 208). In addition, already in the 1950s, the

magazine for a general female readership *Path* (*Senda*) published by Women's Catholic Action also mentioned the foremothers of the first wave of the Spanish women's movement: Emilia Pardo Bazán and Concepción Arenal.(5)

Part of the transmission of knowledge between the first and second waves of women's activism also took place through personal contacts between feminist activists in Franco's Spain and first-wave feminists who lived in exile. For example, when future President of the Spanish Association of Women Lawyers María Telo individually joined the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers (IFWLC) in 1958 and attended the 1958 IFWLC meeting in Brussels, she met Clara Campoamor. She was one of the first three parliamentarians of the Second Republic, had belonged to the IFWLC since its founding in 1928, and during the dictatorship lived in exile in Switzerland. Clara Campoamor encouraged María Telo to fight for the equality of women and men before the law in Spain (Ruiz, 2007). In the interview, María Telo related this encounter:

> And there, I met Clara Campoamor. Yes, and I was vividly impressed by her. Yes, because when I was a law student [during the Second Republic], Clara Campoamor was a role model for me. These women [feminist political leaders of the Second Republic] ... I wanted to imitate them. And there I was, in that conference, when I met her ... I was fascinated by her, and we became very close friends (Telo, 2009).

The knowledge transmitted to the next generations by activists during Franco's dictatorship comprised information on international feminist literature. For example, in 1949, French feminist Simone de Beauvoir published *Le Deuxième Sexe* (*The Second Sex*). This book was included in the list of books prohibited by the Catholic Church. Subsequently, *Le*

Deuxième Sexe could not be published in Spain. It was translated into Spanish and published in Argentina in the 1950s and onwards. SESM founder María Campo Alange made reference to *Le Deuxième Sexe* in her work, for instance in the foreword to the second edition of *The Secret Sex War* (Campo Alange, [1948] 1950). In 1965, the Spanish translation of US feminist Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* was published in Spain and was preceded by a foreword written by SESM member Lilí Álvarez. In 1974, in Madrid, Betty Friedan delivered a public lecture, which was attended by hundreds of people. The Friedan lecture was organized by the Association for Cultural Promotion and Evolution (APEC) (de Yzaguirre, 2009; M. Salas & Comabella, 1999, pp. 45-46). In the interview, APEC founder Pilar de Yzaguirre affirmed: "I have always thought that the international dimension is the foundation on which to build any type of activity" (de Yzaguirre, 2009). Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan were two of the most widely read and debated authors by women's activists in Franco's Spain. Consequently, after 1975, when the women's movement publicly re-emerged, it was not totally disconnected to the debates prevalent in democratic countries.

Activists in different locations were aware of the existence of other activists and other women's groups. In the interview, Carmen Salas, General Secretary of Women's Catholic Action, referred to the "meetings and links with other groups ... Then, there were always contacts among activists on women's issues" (C. Salas, 2009). Activists also perceived the differences among them. As APEC founder Pilar de Yzaguirre synthesized:

> Each group had its own role to play [within the movement]. There were radical groups ... and we [APEC members and leaders] supported the radicals ... We were adult and intelligent enough to realize that radicalism was for a different type of women who needed to be radical in order to feel good. But for us, it was the opposite ... Knowledge

> detracts people from radicalism and leads more to the belief that everything is very complex (de Yzaguirre, 2009).

For example, the Spanish Association of Women Lawyers was often seen as the organization pursuing legal reform (de Yzaguirre, 2009; Pérez-Seoane, 2009; P. Salas, 2009). SESM members considered themselves and were usually viewed by activists of other SMOs as the intellectual vanguard of the movement (Jiménez, 2009; Pérez-Seoane, 2009). In the interview, SESM member Concepción Borreguero explained:

> We insisted on being a small group, because in small groups people can work better than in large groups ... We were determined to be very few women, but also very prominent women. We were completely set on being very "selective" (not in negative terms) ... We wanted a small group to be sure that the eight or nine of us said only authentic and profound things (Borreguero, 2009).

In the same line, MDM leader Mercedes Comabella remembered the impression received from SESM members when she first met them in 1970:

> My first impression was that they [SESM members] were very cultivated women because they had university training. I thought that they were very superior to me ... I had not attended college. Do you understand? ... I continuously felt that I was without the proper training ... And I thought "I do not know whether I would always agree with them or not, but what they say makes sense" ... They were not women of action, they were intellectuals (Comabella, 2009).

Activists from different groups felt that they were mobilized to bring about social change by attempting to improve the status of women as a group and build a better environment for the future generation of women. As SESM member Concepción Borreguero stated: “We were doing many things for the women to come” (Borreguero, 2009). This awareness of each other (and of the differences among each other) and the common understanding that all activists were trying to erode gender hierarchies conferred the sense of belonging to the women’s movement.

CONCLUSION

The concept of abeyance insightfully captures the obstacles that social movements encounter when surviving in adverse political environments. The notion of abeyance was originally coined from and later applied to the study of collective action in democratic (or semi-democratic) polities. However, as the empirical case of women’s organizing in Franco’s Spain shows, the concept of abeyance can be used to understand social activism in non-democratic regimes. The notion of abeyance prevents scholars from concluding in a rush (and wrongly) that social movements under dictatorships are dead, and lead scholars to investigate whether social movements are rather latent. Seen from another perspective, the concept of abeyance puts the (potential) continuity of collective action between waves of mobilization in non-democracies where it belongs: at the center of sociological inquiry. Generally speaking, scholarship on social movements in non-democracies has not adequately analyzed movement continuity because this scholarship has mainly studied transitions to democracy, policies and protests. Some autocracies fully destroy social movements active in pre-dictatorship times. But other times, non-democratic regimes force social movements into an abeyance phase and deeply influence social movements with regard to location, goals and activities.

In relation to location of social activism, part of the literature on movements in abeyance states that in these periods, the most important SMOs are the organizations that survive from the previous wave of mobilization, and that these SMOs are staffed by committed militants from the former stage of mobilization. Another part of this literature defends that different varieties of abeyance structures are useful in different contexts, and that many activists may be relatively new to the movement. In line with the latter part of this literature, this article shows that in non-democratic contexts, it is highly probable that social movement activity takes place in locations different from surviving SMOs if organizations of the previous wave of a movement are dismantled. These new SMOs are staffed mainly by new activists because most leaders and activists of the former stage of the mobilization are repressed. Activism may also emerge in spaces of civil society such as churches and cultural groups, which are permitted or tolerated by non-democratic regimes. In contrast, in democratic polities, these spaces are not the main sites of social movement activity. Because in non-democracies part of social activism may develop in churches, it is likely that religion plays an important role in fueling collective action.

With respect to goals, part of the literature of social movements in abeyance proposes that SMOs often focus on single goals, given their reduced material and human resources. In contrast, in non-democratic political regimes in abeyance times, it is unlikely that social movements pursue single goals. The non-democratic nature of the political regime makes some (or many) social movements interested in regime change or at least in reforms within the parameters of the political regime in addition to more concrete claims, be these for instance, feminism, ecology or working-class progress. As was the case in Franco's Spain with the women's movement, in abeyance times, when activists chose their goals, the option of political goals was likely to be present in part of the movement. The unresolved question of

the right relationship between movements and the mainstream political arena is probably a legacy that movements in abeyance during dictatorships pass to the next wave of mobilization.

As for activities, the literature on movements in abeyance argues that in unfavorable political climates, movement activists choose an unobtrusive repertoire of activities. While arguing in the same line, this article specifies that in non-democratic regimes, opportunities for collective action are so restricted that it is likely that individual acts by movement activists are of paramount importance. In the first two decades of Franco's dictatorship, when state repression of any form of collective action was at its peak, individual activism on behalf of women was crucial. Examples of this type of activism include writing and publishing on women's status and women's history from a critical perspective. Scholarship on democracies notes the tendency of social movements in abeyance to focus on cultural activities. In non-democratic regimes, cultural activities may be central for movements, because some autocracies at times tolerate a certain degree of cultural pluralism while ferociously repressing political dissent. In Franco's Spain, activists in the women's movement built (limited) spaces for public expression on women's and other issues with their writings and other cultural activities. These spaces were very valuable because mass media censorship banned all political writings against the authoritarian regime, along with any work that was against Catholic doctrine or was considered amoral by the Church. Women's activists divulged some views on women that were clearly more progressive than those proclaimed by political authorities and the Catholic hierarchy. Through cultural (and other) activities, Spanish activists handed down to the second wave of women's activists knowledge of the first wave of women's organizing and international feminist literature. What provided continuity between the first and the second wave of the Spanish women's movement was in part the

transmission of knowledge through movement entrepreneurs or leaders active during the Franco's regime.

In general, some social movements under prolonged authoritarian rule manage to link and transmit the aims, repertoires of tactics and collective identities of pre-dictatorship activists to those of post-dictatorship activists. This bridging work is done mainly through cultural activities. This work of bridging and transmitting knowledge from one activist generation to another is a major contribution of activists working under authoritarianism that has yet to be recognized in the social movement literature.

In Spain, in the mid-1930s, the women's movement underwent a period of abeyance due to the inhospitable climate provoked by the authoritarian regime headed by Franco. Franco's dictatorship was later replaced by a democratic regime when a new wave of women's activism emerged. Future studies should explore what happens to social movement activity when an authoritarian regime is not followed by a democratic regime but by a sustained period of non-democratic rule. Possibly, low social movement activity would simply be part of the permanent political situation, that is, abeyance periods are the norm under non-democratic rule.

Research on social movements in non-democratic regimes helps refine the notion of abeyance to understand the complex nature of long-term adverse political circumstances and mobilization in general. That social movement activity is carried on within surviving SMOs and/or by surviving committed militants, and/or is focused on single or multiple goals are not key criteria in evaluating whether a movement is in abeyance or dead. The transmission of knowledge between waves of mobilization is the crucial indicator of a movement in abeyance. In principle, this transmission of knowledge takes place more easily in democratic than in non-democratic regimes because in the former SMOs and activists from the previous wave

are in themselves a vestige of former times of mobilization. Under non-democratic rule, former committed militants are usually not present to pass knowledge to the next generation of activists and memories are carried on mainly through the cultural activities of movements. Memories of past grievances and past battles help subordinate groups to forge a collective identity and fuel the commitment to fight against injustices in the years to come.

NOTES

1. An earlier version of this article received the "Women and Politics Research Section of the American Political Science Association - Best Paper Award 2010." In order to avoid repetition, in this article the expressions "non-democracies", "non-democratic (political) regimes", "dictatorships", "authoritarian (political) regimes", "authoritarianism", "autocracies" and "repressive settings" are used interchangeably.

2. A point of clarification is due here. There are contrasting approaches to the study of social movements. My account is in tune with the political process perspective rather than the new social movement approach associated largely although not exclusively with Melucci. I have chosen the former approach because it pays considerable attention to the influence of the political environment on social movements since I study the impact of a type of political regime (dictatorships) on collective action. But abeyance processes can be studied using the latter perspective (for instance, Barry, Chandler & Berg, 2007).

3. A caveat is necessary at this point. In Franco's Spain, there were differences across decades. Historians have stressed the contrast between the war and immediate postwar and later periods (Morcillo, 2010). Variations across time are also noted throughout this article. However, during its whole existence Franco's regime was a non-democracy and subsequently constituted a political environment that was hostile for social movements. In this regard,

Franco's dictatorship was truly different from the two democracies that preceded and followed it and it

4. Subsequently, the AEMSL adopted other names. The AEMSL is used in the remaining of the article.

5. For instance, *Senda*: Number 124, April 1953, p. 21; Number 154, April 1956, p. 22.

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APPENDIX: INTERVIEWS WITH AUTHOR

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